



Global Policy Group Meeting, 17 January 2017

Summary Report

The Global Policy Group (GPG) held its regular pre-governing bodies meeting on 17 January 2017 at WHO HQ, chaired by the Director-General, and with the participation of the DDG and RDs AMRO, AFRO, EURO, SEARO and WPRO.

The GPG discussed the agendas of the forthcoming meetings of the PBAC25 and EB140, discussing the agenda items, including the nomination process for the DG, and issues of potential controversy or extended negotiations. RDs also shared information on specific issues of particular relevance to their Regions.

The GPG also discussed the proposed programme budget 2018-19 and the current financial situation; the DG election process and transition arrangements; the WHO emergencies programme; mental health; health and migration; and post-polio eradication transition planning.

The GPG reviewed the current financial situation for the Programme Budget (PB) 16-17, which currently has a shortfall of approximately USD 400 million. The DG called for cuts in travel, meetings and recruitment in order to limit planned expenditures so that they remain within available financing, and ensure that the Organization is in a healthy financial situation going into the next biennium.

The GPG recognised that further changes will be needed to the final version of the PB 18-19 based on feedback from Member States in the EB, for presentation to the WHA in May, and anticipated several issues that should be taken into consideration, including; alignment of the PB with the SDGs; review of the WHO emergencies programme budget to better reflect country needs and link the emergencies programme to health systems strengthening; the impact of the polio transition; and consideration of a selective budget cut within Category 6. The GPG also recognised the opportunity provided by the development of the next general programme of work (work on which will commence later this year) to more clearly align the work of WHO with the SDGs.

The GPG discussed the secretariat arrangements to support the DG-nominees and DG-elect in June. The GPG emphasised the importance of providing the DG-elect with necessary information and support, to facilitate an effective transition process. and proposed to offer a meeting for the DG-elect with the GPG immediately following the June EB.

Following a briefing from the EXD WHE on developments in the establishment and operations of the new WHO emergencies programme, the GPG discussed the new business model for WHO work in emergencies at the country level, which will prioritize several key countries for piloting the new model, mobilizing additional resources, building management and operations capacity, and supporting HWO leadership.

World Health Day 2017 will take the theme of depression, linked to a year-long campaign to raise awareness on this important health problem. The GPG agreed on the need to further consider how this work can be enhanced, particularly in relation to health at the primary care level.

The GPG was briefed on recent internal consultations on health and migration, and the development of an organization-wide framework for action. The GPG welcomed the work so far, and agreed to discuss this further at their retreat in March.

The GPG discussed the polio transition, highlighting the need for a study on the consequences of the loss of polio funding on WHO country capacity and on other programme areas. They agreed to establish a mechanism for review and approval of long term contracts from polio funds, to be led by Director POL in close consultation with Regional Offices. The GPG also proposed that progress on polio transition planning should be reviewed in the global and regional governing bodies on a regular basis.

The next meeting of the GPG will be held from 28 Feb to 3 March.